application when it is recommended by the State Government concerned. A total of 130 applications were deferred by BoA as on 31st March, 2008. Tax exemptions are granted to SEZ units/Developers as per the provisions of the SEZ Act, 05/SEZ Rules, 06.

Motive of setting up of SEZs

878. SHRI PRAVEEN RASHTRAPAL: Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) the objective of passing the Special Economic Zones (SEZs) Act;

(b) whether Government has succeeded in providing employment to rural poor by converting agricultural land and by creating SEZs all over the country; and

(c) the details of SEZs into notified area so far approved, started functioning and figures of investment and employment provided during last five years?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE, MINISTRY OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (SHRI JAIRAM RAMESH): (a) The main objectives of SEZs are: Generation of additional economic activity; Promotion of export of goods and services; Promotion of investment from domestic and foreign sources; Creation of employment opportunities; Development of infrastructure facilities.

(b) and (c) 560 SEZs have been approved till date after SEZ Act came into force on 10th February, 2006. Out of which 286 SEZs have been notified till date. Investment and employment in the SEZs are as follows:—

Category of SEZ	Investment in crore Rupees	Employment (number of persons)
Notified SEZs after February 2006	91446	1,10,768
State/Private SEZs set up before 2006	6003.34	56,262
Government SEZs	4456.87	1,99,303
Total	1,01,906.21	3,66,333

Indian Leather Development Programme

879. SHRI MAHENDRA MOHAN: Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Government had implemented the Indian Leather Development Programme aiming towards modernizing the manufacturing capability, capacity building and improving infrastructure for the Leather Sector;

(b) if so, the details of projects, programmes implemented under this scheme during the current Five Year Plan and also the places covered;

(c) whether Government is aware that in Kanpur thousands of people are employed in this industry;